

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
March 25, 2010

**Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta Water Quality Cooperative
Agreements 2010 Request for Proposals**

To help you prepare your proposal, we have prepared answers to questions about the open Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta Water Quality Cooperative Agreements 2010 Request for Proposals. You may submit additional questions via email to contacts listed below.

Q. Is there more information about the “coordinated federal agency initiative to assist ecosystem restoration and water supply reliability in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta (Delta)” referred to on page 3 of the RFP?

A. EPA and six other federal agencies agreed to reinvest in finding Delta water management solutions in a Memorandum of Understanding released in September 2009¹. These six agencies developed an action plan² that directs the agencies to work in a focused and expedited manner to address the degraded Bay-Delta ecosystem. One of the action plan items specifically addresses EPA’s role with respect to water quality.

“Water Quality: EPA will assess the effectiveness of the current regulatory mechanisms designed to protect water quality in the Delta and its tributaries, including standards for toxics, nutrients, and estuarine habitat protection. This assessment will be designed in consultation with the SWRCB and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB). In July 2008, these Water Boards adopted a Strategic Workplan for guiding their Bay-Delta activities. EPA will continue to support many of the significant activities in that Workplan through technical and financial assistance. Over the next several years, the State anticipates multiple point-source permit renewals, new State standards for the Southern Delta and lower San Joaquin River, and Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for pesticides in the Central Valley and mercury in the Delta. EPA’s assessment will complement these ongoing State activities as well as new requirements in the recent California legislation.”

Q. Is Priority A more important to EPA than Priority B?

A. No. Priority A and Priority B are equally important to EPA and their order does not connote relative priority to one another. Proposals must address one of these program priorities, but not both:

¹

<http://www.doi.gov/documents/BayDeltaMOUSigned.pdf>

² <http://www.doi.gov/documents/CAWaterWorkPlan.pdf>

- Priority A: projects that assess Delta water quality issues and regulatory approaches for Delta water quality protection, or
- Priority B: projects that help establish a comprehensive regional monitoring program in the San Joaquin River Basin.

The following questions pertain to Priority A.

Q. Are there specific water quality issues that should be included in proposals?

A. The most competitive proposals should demonstrate expertise in synthesizing and assessing existing water quality information on topics that may include, but are not limited to, toxics, nutrients, emerging contaminants such as endocrine disruptors, interactions of contaminants, and characterization of estuarine habitat.

Q. What is the final product EPA is looking to receive?

A. Final products should propose solutions and include tools regarding the effectiveness of the current regulatory mechanisms designed to protect water quality in the Delta and its tributaries. Products may include, but are not limited to reports, workshops, synthesis or assessment of expert testimony, water quality information or regulatory tools. For example, final deliverables can be a mix of different products such as; a science panel synthesis report; findings, workshops and proceedings; or a report analyzing existing water quality information and recommending regulatory approaches.

Q. Is new research or new water quality studies part of this RFP?

A. The most competitive proposals are not likely to include new data collection or academic research, but rather those proposals that demonstrate an ability to synthesize existing information about water quality in the Delta and the regulatory framework in place to control pollution.

Q. How is this effort different than what the State Water Resources Control Board is undertaking with respect to the Delta?

A. The State Water Resources Control Board and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards are undertaking many activities to address specific water quality issues. These projects are outlined in various documents including the *Strategic Workplan for Activities for in the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary*³ and other documents. This EPA proposal is intended to assist in supplementing California's wide-ranging efforts by addressing the effectiveness of water quality regulations in order to improve water quality conditions in the Delta.

Q. How will the information generated by projects funded by this RFP be used?

A. Deliverables produced by the funded projects may be used by a wide-range of entities to identify any gaps in water quality regulations or potential alternative approaches to protect Delta water quality.

³http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/bay_delta/strategic_plan/docs/baydelta_workplan_final.pdf

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For More Information

**Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta Water Quality Cooperative Agreements
2010 Request for Proposals**
<http://www.epa.gov/region09/funding/pdfs/DeltaWqca2010rfpFinal.pdf>

San Francisco Bay-Delta Estuary
<http://www.epa.gov/region09/water/watershed/sfbay-delta.html>